

ORAL MEMOIRS  
OF  
MARY FAYE STANLEY

An interview conducted on  
July 10, 2020

Interviewer: Lydia Dillen

Angelo State University  
West Texas Collection  
“Greatest Generation Oral History Archive”

LEGAL STATUS: The oral memoirs of Mary Faye Stanley are unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on July 13, 2020.

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DILLEN: Okay. My name is Lydia Dillen, it is July 10, 2020 and I am interviewing Mary Faye Stanley over the phone. So, I'm going to go ahead and start asking you a few questions. Starting with: When and where were you born?

STANLEY: I was born at Truby, Texas, in Jones County.

DILLEN: And is that where you grew up?

STANLEY: That's where I grew up until I went to school in Abilene.

DILLEN: Alright.

STANLEY: And - and then I went to school in Anson to finish high school. And then went to Abilene.

DILLEN: Alright. Did you attend any schools and colleges there in Abilene?

STANLEY: I went to John's Business College.

DILLEN: What was your first job?

STANLEY: I worked in the credit office at Montgomery Ward.

DILLEN: So do you have any personal connections to a service member during WWII?

STANLEY: Well, not now.

DILLEN: Did you at the time?

STANLEY: Did I what?

DILLEN: Did you have any connections to a service member of WWII at the time?

STANLEY: I did not. I met my husband after - he came home after I had gone to school in Abilene and worked in Abilene.

DILLEN: Alright. How did your community change during WWII?

STANLEY: Well, I don't - I don't know since... now that was more or less before my time. [chuckles]

DILLEN: Alright. Um, do you have any idea about what the end of WWII was like in your community? Or if there were changes involved? Just if you can remember anything from around that time that people had mentioned or you had experienced afterwards.

STANLEY: Well, living in the country I - I didn't know a lot about it and someone talked about hearing our school principal listen to it on the radio but I don't remember that so it must not have made an impression [chuckles] on me. And then living in the country we didn't know about it until... well I believe we went to church on Sunday night and - oh, that was the bombing of Pearl Harbor that they talked about on Sunday night.

DILLEN: Okay. What other major events shaped your life?

STANLEY: Well, I've always had a quiet life [chuckles] so I don't - I didn't have anything too major. And then living in the country as I did and growing up there, I didn't know a lot of these things that went on.

DILLEN: Alright. So you were kind of secluded from a lot of the things that were happening in the community?

STANLEY: Right, because - well, I lived three miles from school and we walked to school and walked back. And I was acquainted with the ones that went to school. I knew them better than anybody else, the ones we walked with coming home from school.

DILLEN: Mhmm.

STANLEY: And that's probably one of the - the major changes is people don't walk that far to school anymore. [chuckles]

DILLEN: Right. What do you think of the idea of a Greatest Generation?

STANLEY: Well, I don't know. I have - I had two brothers just older than me that were in the service. But since I came along - and they were in the class of '45 and I was in the class of '46 at Anson. And there was just that much difference in the age that they went into training for WWII and Billy and Leslie Jr. were in the service when it was over, when they cha- uh, declared peace. [chuckles]

DILLEN: Mhmm. Do you know what branches they were in of the service?

STANLEY: My older br- oldest brother, Leslie Jr., was in the infantry. He had volunteered for the mili- uh, for the Air Force or Navy. But the day he got out of high school he had his notice in the paper - in the mail that he would be going into the infantry. And my brother, Billy, was in the Air Force and whether, um, whatever you... you do. He was at Chanute Field and my older brother was at Fort Benning, Georgia.

DILLEN: Mhmm. Do you think having close family members in the service affected you at the time?

STANLEY: Well, it - well, I didn't realize what it was like until it was over. I think that it could've been really bad had it continued on and they'd had to go overseas.

DILLEN: Mhmm.

STANLEY: But they both finished school in '45 and so that's the - I think they were waiting for Leslie Jr. to get out of high school. [laughs]

DILLEN: [chuckles]

STANLEY: Because he had - was delayed one year in getting out. And Billy is the one that has done so much research for us on the - well, getting things done. And our Confederate grandfather that's buried at Abilene is - he did a memorial marker for them, was instigated in getting a memorial marker for him of a Confederate. And he was from Alabama, our grandfather that was in the Confederate.

DILLEN: Mhmm. Do you have any items or objects, correspondence that you would like to share with the project like old pictures or letters, things like that?

STANLEY: Well, I may have. I was trying to think. Well, I'll have to see. I don't have it - have them right here.

DILLEN: That's alright. I know I had talked to your niece about, um, family records that she has and I was just curious if you had anything that's yours that you were interested in sharing that reminds you of the time and of what your experiences were like.

STANLEY: Well, I have a collection of my husband's furs that he had. He was a cowboy. [laughs]

DILLEN: [chuckles]

STANLEY: And - and I have pictures of that that I've made. Do you want me to send it to you, or?

DILLEN: Um, if you have pictures, that would be interesting.

STANLEY: Well, and I have many pictures. [laughs]

DILLEN: [chuckles]

STANLEY: But that is the name of my game, is pictures.

DILLEN: Mhmm.

STANLEY: And - and my niece said she had the picture - or was going to share my dad's motorcycle trophy. And I have one also, he had gotten two of them. And my dad was also a fly-he was a pilot and he registered for WWII but he was 35, and with five kids he thought they might not want him. [laughs]

DILLEN: Mm. [laughs]

STANLEY: But anyway, I can remember when he registered for WWII there at Truby, they came up there to register. And I - well, I don't think of anything else right now about that time.

DILLEN: Alright. Is there any other stories or things you would like to mention about the service or wars around your time and how it affected you?

STANLEY: Well, I don't think of anything else because our life went on as usual living out in the country like that.

DILLEN: Mhmm. Okay, well, thank you for taking the time to talk with me today.

STANLEY: Alright, very good. And, uh, my great granddad that was in the Civil War is buried at Abilene cemetery, the municipal cemetery. And then my dad is buried at Midway in Jones County, North of Abilene. And then some of my other family is buried there, the Mathis family is buried there. His granddad, Mathis, that raised him since his dad died when he was six. And there was a younger brother and sister and his granddad, G.W. Mathis, raised him and the other two children until - and lived with them there at Truby - until they had married and then they moved out. And the same house where my dad and his two sis- uh, his sister and brother were born is the same house where I was born and then my three brothers and sister were all born there in that same house at Truby, so.

DILLEN: Wow.

STANLEY: Alright, just needed to mention that. [chuckles]

DILLEN: [chuckles] Alright.

STANLEY: Alright, thank you much.

DILLEN: Thank you so much.